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English only initiative draws support

By Jon Perez
Staff Writer

Proposition 227 has gained support with the recent backing by Asian-American leaders, and it has left some San Jose State University instructors scratching their heads.

The recent endorsement on April 9 by Asian Councilmen Ho Chung of Garden Grove and Tony Lam of Westminster — which are south of Anaheim — has brought into light the minority support for Prop. 227.

"A lot of people don't have a good idea of what it is," SJSU Elementary Education professor Owen Boyle said. "I don't know any professors who support

this."

Prop. 227 is an initiative that will appear on the California ballot on June 2 that would require all public school instruction to be conducted in English if passed, according to the June 1998 Official Voter Pamphlet. The proposition will provide for an initial short-term placement, not normally exceeding one year, in intensive sheltered English immersion programs for children not fluent in English.

The pamphlet further states the requirement may be waived by parents if a child already knows English, has special needs or would learn English faster through an alternate instructional technique.

"Most children are entering at the kindergarten and first grade level and can learn English easier, but instead, we segregate them."

— Sheri Annis
English for the Children

"Most children are entering at the kindergarten and first grade level and can learn English easier, but instead, we segregate them," said Sheri Annis, press

secretary for English for the Children — a nonprofit organization which campaigns for Prop. 227.

According to the Field

Institute — a nonpartisan, non-profit research organization based in San Francisco that studies the public opinion and behavior on social and political issues — there is a large percentage of the community that would support Prop. 227.

According to a poll conducted in March, of the 1,178 registered voters surveyed — 727 were deemed as likely voters by the institute — 70 percent would vote in favor. Of the racial subgroups, 75 percent of Asians, 71 percent of whites, 63 percent of African-Americans and 61 percent of Latinos would vote for Prop. 227.

According to SJSU elementary education professor Judith

Lessow-Hurley, polls can be misleading.

"Those are populations that want their kids to speak English, but they don't see the whole issue," Lessow-Hurley said. "If you asked the questions differently, they wouldn't support it," she said while commenting on the fact that teachers can be held liable if they teach students in their own language.

The size of the subgroups polled were: 564 white, 71 Latino, 40 African-American and 59 Asian participants, while other categories included Republican, Democrat and other.

Advocates for Prop. 227 say learning a new language at a

See Prop. 227, page 3

Sharks make splash

Fans flood Arena to watch televised game, celebrate as SJ hockey earns trip to playoffs

By Asa Bexell
Staff Writer

Hockey fans at the San Jose Arena leapt to their feet and cheered as they watched the San Jose Sharks clinch a Western Conference playoff spot Wednesday — on television.

About 6,000 faithful supporters showed up at the arena for a closed-circuit telecast of the Sharks vs. the Calgary Flames game — played in Calgary — which ended in a 3-3 tie.

"This is unbelievable," arena usher Manny Subia said about the fans' turnout. "We only expected about 1,500 people."

The Sharks might have been in Calgary, but the atmosphere at the arena was that of a home game. Though the ice lay empty, the entire building pulsated with playoff fever.

The crowd cheered "Let's go, Sharks! Let's go, Sharks!" making chopping motions with their arms as the theme from the movie "Jaws" blared through the speakers.

Sharkie, the toothy mascot, was on hand as usual, pumping up the fans and tossing prizes into the frenzied crowd.

Even the Zamboni, the ice resurfacing machine, took a couple of laps around the ice, giving some lucky kids a ride. The game was shown on a large screen below the score board.

As Jeff Friesen scored a short-handed goal in the second period, giving the Sharks a 3-1 lead, fans started chanting "Playoffs! Playoffs!"

See Sharks, page 4

Rock on 'Guy'



During the noon concert held at the Student Union, where the band The Project played, San Jose resident Guy Francis Lopez enjoyed the tunes by dancing.

See related story on page 3

Merger met with student apathy

B of A, NationsBank join forces in coast-to-coast operation; SJSU largely unimpressed

By Asa Bexell
Staff Writer

On Monday, Bank of America and NationsBank Corp. announced a merger that will make them the largest bank in the country and the only bank operating coast-to-coast.

Though San Jose State University has many Bank of America customers, students reacted to the news with a shrug.

"I don't really know what is going on with it (the merger)," said Tuneke Tucker, a communications major and a Bank of America customer. "I don't know if it is going to benefit me, but I have been thinking about switching banks anyway."

Seena Nekaiien, a nursing major who also banks with Bank of America, thinks the merger is no big deal.

"It doesn't worry me," she said. "If they change their fees I

will just go to a different bank."

According to Bruce Cochran, professor in accounting and finance, the expansion of Bank of America is unlikely to have any impact on SJSU students.

"This merger is primarily driven by having a nation wide franchise," he said.

Cochran does not expect banking fees to increase, and, if they do, he believes customers have other options.

Though the new bank which retains the name Bank of America will be the biggest in the nation, Cochran said there are still many banks to choose from.

"It is not even close to a monopoly," he said. "We have 9,000 banks in this country."

If anything, Cochran said, customers will benefit from the deal because Bank of America locations will be more convenient.

"For people who travel, this will be wonderful," he said. "Now you can write checks in 22 states."

Business major Aicha Kone, who owns her own business, thinks the merger is a great idea.

See Merger, page 3

Greek Life looking to expand at SJSU

By Yvonne Ohumukini-Urness
Senior Staff Writer

There is a race to colonize San Jose State University this fall.

Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Pi Kappa Phi and Pi Kappa Alpha fraternities will be conducting public presentations over the next two weeks with the hope of "colonizing" on Spartan soil.

Colonizing occurs when a fraternity expands its organization and establishes a chapter on a new campus.

The organizations, all finalists in the selection process, are competing to be the new

National Interfraternity Council chapter on campus.

Unlike many local fraternities which use Greek letters in their names but have no national affiliation, National Interfraternity Council members are governed by the policies, procedures and rules set forth by their national headquarters.

According to the Jo-Anne Shibles, coordinator of Greek Life, SJSU currently has 12 chapters that belong to the national council. Those chapters make up the university's

See Frats, page 3

Adios El Niño: Warmer temperatures on way
Weather phase La Niña could pack drier punch this springBy Leah Bower
Staff Writer

Expect warmer weather through this weekend to take the edge off this spring's chilly, El Niño-inspired breezes, according to Channel 11 Weather Anchor Chris Donohoe.

"We'll see temperatures above normal in the low to mid 70s this weekend and into next week," Donohoe said. "El Niño's effects aren't as strong. We are getting into typical spring weather."

Linda Glover, a senior in child development at San Jose State University, said Thursday's sunshine was great.

"It's nice to have warm weather again," Glover said. "Of course, it makes me not want to do my homework."

Marianna Olcott, a professor in the Department of Humanities, said San Jose's spring reminded her of home, to her dismay.

"This is not spring, this is New York," said Olcott, a former

New Yorker. "It is cold. This is terrible."

El Niño, which has had a cooling effect on normal spring temperatures, may be followed later this year by a weather phase called La Niña, according to Donohoe.

La Niña, a cooling of the water in the eastern half of the Pacific Ocean, is the opposite of the warming effect of El Niño.

While the effects of La Niña on the weather in the tropics are the opposite of El Niño, there are

no well-defined effects for California, said Jerry Steffens, an SJSU professor of meteorology.

California would most likely see drier weather than normal during La Niña, with fewer and weaker storm systems, according to Donohoe.

"El Niño is still in effect," Donohoe said. "When this El Niño ends we will be able to see if we are looking at a La Niña."

Christy VanAken, who is

See La Niña, page 3



Daniel Frohlich/Spartan Daily

Swimmers Anna Vallentine, Getchen Cook and Michelle Fahmy take advantage of the break in the weather by laying out by the pool at the San Jose State University Aquatic Center.

Children leashed like dogs reveal parents' neglect



Yvette Anna Trejo
STAFF WRITER

We live in a society where some people cradle their four-legged pets in their arms while they walk around a mall, yet some parents find the need to put their children on a leash. What's going on in this world? I guess I should start at the beginning.

Recently I was at work in Valley Fair, staring off into space, and I began to think about some special little people that exist in this world — babies and children. Of course they are all angels. Well, cherubs to be more specific. They are warm and soft and cuddly, almost like a puppy, but better. They have these innocent eyes of understanding and they look at you as to say, "Love me and I'll love you right back."

I thought about my 2-month-old nephew and how I love to hold him every chance I get. I look at his little face and kiss his plump cheeks and wish he would stay that way forever.

I can already imagine the day he is able to walk and hold my hand as we travel to places he's never been before on his own two feet. We'll visit places like the backyard, the park, his future elementary school and maybe we'll even take a trip to the mall.

As I imagined all the fun things I'll eventually do with the new cherub in my family, I suddenly snapped back into reality.

I looked out the window and into the sea of people outside my store and I saw a most disturbing sight. I saw a mom walking her little cherub. No, I don't mean walking with her little cherub, I mean walking her cherub. This crazy woman had her child on a leash. This was no ordinary leash. It had a harness almost fit for a bungee jumper.

Why has it become so difficult to hold a child's hand? That's one of the best feelings in the world — feeling a child's hand in your own, knowing that this little person is relying on you to keep him or her safe.

Aside from the leashed children, I see the neglected children. I see hurried parents racing from one destination to the next nearly forgetting their child is trailing behind, almost running just to keep up. Perhaps even more heartbreaking is the fact that sometimes these parents don't even turn around to make sure their little ones are still there.

Children are little human beings, not yet ruined by much of the world's problems. There's only so much time before these innocent little boys and girls grow up. Parents and families shouldn't take this time for granted. We need to make the most of every moment because we're never promised a tomorrow.

The next time you see your little cherub, look deep into those little eyes and try to take advantage of today and understand the best things in life won't be around forever.

Yvette Anna Trejo is a *Spartan Daily* staff writer.



Hussey highlights: beer drinkers' havens

Look around you, it's everywhere. The sun is shining, people are wearing less clothing and the vinyl seats in your car are heating up to an unbearable degree.

Yes, it's summer, and it's barely peeking at you from behind your unread textbooks and unfinished term papers. And don't forget those finals.

But with the onset of summer, it's time to forget about those unimportant scholastic pursuits and time to concentrate on what really takes center stage during the dog-days of summer: outdoor drinking.

I'm talking about going somewhere and doing something, showing those Milwaukee's Bests a sunny day on the town like they deserve.

Those frosty, cold beers don't want to be cramped up in your fridge, they want to be free, roaming the land in your portable cooler or backpack. Show them a good time because you're probably gonna kill them soon.

The first step in a successful outdoor drinking excursion is to purchase a sports bottle from your local gas station. These containers are indispensable for polishing off beers while keeping the local "peacekeepers" off your back.

Next, read through my carefully compiled list of outdoor drinking activities and I guarantee a long, fuzzy, bloodshot summer with your friends.

• Golf epitomizes the summertime drinking experience. There's grass, birds and no one really cares if you're drinking heavily. If you find a course that offers them, I recommend that you pick yourself up a cart because they give you room for a cooler as well as help you practice those DUI skills. A word of caution though: If you're playing a full 18, make sure you bring enough booze because you're not going to find a 7-11 on the 11th fairway.

• An excellent variation of regular golf is its bastard son, frisbee golf. This can be done on pretty much any stretch of land except the local police department parking lot. Bring a backpack of beer and your sports bottle and start picking out those targets. Campuses like SJSU make ideal courses as



Andrew Hussey
LOSER FRIENDLY

they offer you both concrete and natural hazards as well as a wide range of "holes." Regular golf etiquette applies here but don't be surprised if passersby who aren't in tune with your game start throwing your "ball" back to you.

• You must go camping sometime this summer to really put your liver to the test. The farther from civilization the better because you can shed that sports bottle and just hang on to the can or bottle. It really doesn't matter where you go camping either, although I prefer someplace near a body of water and away from prying, forest ranger eyes. With a full day of hiking, cooking, swimming and just plain messing around, you can easily polish off a 12-pack. So once again, bring enough to last. You may want to bring food and sleeping bags, too, but that's optional.

• Travelling out of your city is fun although Nevada is really your only choice if you want to show your beer a good time. Did you know that you can walk around Nevada streets with a beer in your hand, pulling beers out of your backpack as the need arises? It's actually legal. Although Vegas is fun, Laughlin, Tahoe and Lake Powell take the cake as far as intimate drinking locales.

• If you happen to have a gang of seasoned drinkers handy, you're looking at a slobball game. The same rules as softball apply, but you have to drink a beer before you bat as well as at the bases. The hardest part about slobball is lasting a full nine innings and finding a piece of grass where a dozen people can run around, boozing it up, without attracting unwanted attention.

Well, gentle reader, that's not the end of my list, but it is the end of my column. Remember: I don't condone excessive drinking or recommend it for everyone, I just like it a lot.

Andrew Hussey is the *Spartan Daily* entertainment/lifestyle editor. His column appears every Friday.

Gardens relieve stress, promote healthy living

As spring promises to come out of hiding, I am drawn back to a place where orange and yellow butterflies flutter over whisper-soft dandelions on a lazy hillside — a refuge where as a child I could let my imagination roam the natural beauty until sunset.

Unfortunately, that hillside exists too many miles from San Jose State University.

The State of California should recognize that flowers and books go together when preparing campuses for students. I cringe whenever I hear people complain about the expense to beautify our campus.

Unfortunately, those folks don't understand how beautiful surroundings can positively affect the mind. Money for fountains, green lawns and flower beds is well spent and way past due.

There are some places on campus where trees are growing and flowers are blooming. But SJSU used to be a pippen, according to Wiggys Sivertsen, SJSU director of counseling.

"The trees and flowers show that all is well with the world," Sivertsen said. "That it is continuing."

A healing environment serves as a transition to restore our healthy state and to heal our emotions, according to Marni Barnes, a sociologist-turned-landscaper and owner of Deva Landscaping in Palo Alto.

"We can design the environment to cue us to a time when we were children and to connect us to our child-like mind or primary thought process," Barnes said.

Students can create their own private gardens for healthy bodies and minds. Flower pots may be used if land is in short supply.

Maybe SJSU will also consider some of the following recommendations to make the campus a healing and less stressful environment.

Sensory stimuli such as jasmine, scented flowers and edible herbs awaken most of our five senses and are essential in the healing garden.

A hedge, fence or other physical barrier that begins at the garden's perimeter acts as a privacy boundary in the therapeutic landscape.

White noise, strangers and cars remain outside, while peace and serenity are preserved within the garden creating the essence of a true sanctuary.

The healing garden's effect is like a passage, according to Barnes, that emphasizes transition through movement, to give a sense of being away and to trigger happy memories.

This passage becomes a kind of time travel through the seasons, or stages of life, as nature is allowed to be, to take its course. Walking over or through water helps to move us through this cycle, Barnes said.

So go find a garden, and open a book.

Cindy Scarberry is a *Spartan Daily* staff writer.

Sparta Guide

Today

CHINESE CAMPUS FELLOWSHIP

Video/slide show from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. in Business Classrooms, Room 219. For more information, call Esther Mar at (408) 298-4693.

CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY

Free film "Orientation" at 7:30 p.m. at 410 Cambridge Ave., Suite C, Palo Alto. For more information, call Joe Feshback at (650) 853-0602.

PI SIGMA ALPHA (NATIONAL POLITICAL SCIENCE HONOR SOCIETY)

Plato Club — a social for students and professors at 8 p.m. at Waves, 65 Post St. For more information, call Marina at (408) 924-5570.

SJSU THEATRE DEPARTMENT

"Brecht, Lies and Videotape," new directors' workshop at 1 and 7 p.m. in Hal Todd Studio in Hugh Gill Hall. For more information, call Mary Gibboney at (408) 924-4555.

SJSU & THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY AND PSYCHODRAMA

The 56th Annual Psychodrama Conference (through Monday) from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. at the Parc Fifty Five Hotel in San Francisco. For more information, call Anna Jaffer at (408) 924-3623.

"STARS ON ICE"

Ice skating with children who have disabilities from 4 - 5 p.m. at the Ice Centre of San Jose. Volunteers needed. For more information, call Pamela Nail at (925) 432-8707.

Saturday

ALPHA KAPPA DELTA PHI
"Choices," a benefit ball and talent showcase from 7:30 p.m. - 1 a.m. in the Student Union's Loma Prieta Ballroom. All proceeds go to Next Door: Solutions to Domestic Violence. For ticket information, call Sherry at (408) 279-1980.

SJSU THEATRE DEPARTMENT

"Brecht, Lies and Videotape," new directors' workshop at 7 p.m. in Hal

Todd Studio in Hugh Gill Hall. For more information, call Mary Gibboney at (408) 924-4555.

Sunday

ALPHA PHI OMEGA (NATIONAL CO-EDUCATIONAL SERVICE FRATERNITY)
General meeting at 6 p.m. in Business Classroom Building, Room 312. All members welcome, past, present and future. For more information, call (408) 924-6626.

ALPHA PHI SORORITY

MAP luncheon from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Alpha Phi house, 210 S. 10th St. For more information, call Jennifer at (408) 294-5520.

SAN JOSE HILLEL

Holocaust history at 6:30 p.m. at Hillel House, 213 S. 12th St. For more information, call Josh at (408) 289-9957, ext. 11.

Monday

CAREER CENTER

Co-op Workshop at 1:30 p.m. in the Student Union's Almaden Room. For

more information, call the Career Resource Center at (408) 924-6034.

LINGUISTICS & LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

"Native/Non-Native Speaker Differences in Vocabulary Acquisition, Part 2," by Dr. Swathi Vanniarajan from 6 - 7:30 p.m. in Business Classrooms, Room 102. For more information, call Angela at (408) 924-4704.

SCHOOL OF ART & DESIGN

Student Galleries' Art Shows from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. in the Art Building/Industrial Studies. For more information, call Brendan at (408) 924-4330.

SIGMA NU

Teeter-Totter-A-Thon from 12 - 6 p.m. at Sigma Nu house, 155 S. 11th St., to raise funds and awareness to combat cystic fibrosis. For more information, call Nadine Mackey at (408) 356-6429.

Sparta Guide is provided free of charge to students, faculty and staff. The deadline for entries is noon, three days before desired publication date. Entry forms are available in the *Spartan Daily* Office. Space restrictions may require editing of submissions.

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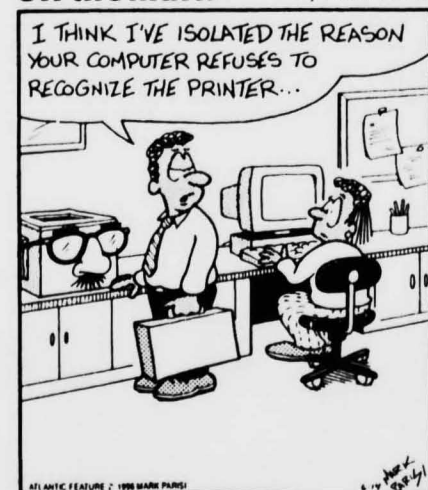
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off the mark

by Mark Parisi



You gotta get 'class'

Sharks: San Jose skates to 3-3 tie; lands playoff berth in process

Continued from page 1

But the game was far from over. In the third period the Flames caught up with the Sharks, scoring their third goal on a lapse by goalie Mike Vernon.

The game went into overtime and the arena got quiet. Sharkie paced back and forth on the ice, and everyone stared nervously at the screen.

As the final horn announced the end of overtime, the fans cheered and hugged, celebrating the Sharks' return to playoff hockey.

It has been three years since the last time the team made it past the regular season.

This time the Sharks had some help. Thanks to the Toronto Maple Leafs' 3-2 win over the Chicago Blackhawks, the Sharks only needed a tie to clinch a playoff berth.

Chicago's loss ended the longest playoff streak in the history of the National Hockey League.

The Blackhawks have made it into post-season play 28 consecutive seasons, until this year.

As Sharks fans left the arena

Wednesday, spirits were high.

"This is great," said Jose Lopez from San Jose, who attended the event with his family and friends. "Now they (the Sharks) will make it to the Stanley Cup."

Tom Kemp, a Sharks season ticket holder who came to the arena because he could not see the game anywhere else, predicted doom.

"I think they will end up losing to Dallas," he said.

Hockey fans Brandi Mickler and Erik Bergstrom from Campbell thought it was a great idea to broadcast the game at the arena.

"It (the game) wasn't on local TV, and we didn't want to miss it," Bergstrom said.

In spite of the importance of Wednesday's game,

no local television or cable stations showed it.

As the parking lots emptied outside the San Jose Arena, on the night the Sharks made it into the playoffs, the noise of honking car horns filled the air.

"This is great. Now they (the Sharks) will make it to the Stanley Cup."

— Jose Lopez
San Jose Sharks fan



Left Niese/Spartan Daily

Chris Mladineo, left, of Milpitas and Mitch Ocon of San Jose celebrate after the Sharks take a 3-1 lead in the second period of Wednesday's game at Calgary. Mladineo and Ocon were just

two of the estimated 6,000 fans that watched the game on two large television screens at the San Jose Arena. The Sharks tied Calgary and earned their first playoff berth in three years.

Golden Bears take double-dip from SJSU with strong pitching

By Mark Gomez
Staff Writer

Winning eight game this season against ranked teams, San Jose State University softball coach Connie Miner was looking for a similar result in a doubleheader Wednesday against No. 21 ranked Cal Bears.

The outcome, however, did not go in SJSU's favor. The Spartans offense struggled against the Bears' starting pitchers, Whitney Floyd and Holly Yost, and were held scoreless in both games while managing only five hits.

SJSU lost the first game 5-0 and dropped the nightcap 7-0.

"We haven't been shut down like that all season," Miner said. "It just wasn't a good day at the plate."

In the first game, Cal

banged out nine hits and scored one run in five of the seven innings. Bears center-fielder Amber Phillips was the spark for the Cal offense, going 2-for-3 at the plate, scoring three runs and stealing three bases.

SJSU starter Corina Lilly allowed just five hits and two earned runs in six innings pitched. The Spartan defense committed three errors, resulting in two Cal runs.

"I was a little off," Lilly said, "but I think I did well considering the Cal lineup."

Michelle Morga, the Spartans right fielder, provided a bright spot offensively, going 2-for-2 with two singles. Catcher Sarah Coughlin had the only other SJSU hit.

"I don't think we made adjustments to the pitchers," Miner said. "We really strug-

gled. That is not typical."

The second game resulted in the same outcome. A strong pitching performance from Yost, coupled with Cal's offensive surge, led to another shutout.

Cal roughed up SJSU pitcher Niki Zenger in the second game. Zenger (9-8) gave up five earned runs and nine hits in four innings pitched, including a two-run home run to Carolyn Rojas in the third.

Yost, meanwhile, held the SJSU offense to two hits, and went 3-for-3 from the plate. Paige Bowie, Rojas and first baseman Jenny Ackley each had two hits for the Bears.

The Spartans will attempt to rebound from the loss when they travel to San Diego State for a Western Athletic Conference doubleheader this weekend.

| | GAME ONE | | | | | | | | | R H E | | | | GAME TWO | | | | | | | | | R H E | | |
|------------|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---|------------|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|-------|--|--|
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| SJSU | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | — | 0 | 3 | 3 | SJSU | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | — | 0 | 2 | 0 | | |

Cal — Floyd, Yost (7) and Takasaki.
SJSU — Lilly, Hackett (7) and Coughlin.
WP — Floyd (14-9) LP — Lilly (4-9)
Records Cal — 25-17, SJSU 16-22
T — 1:46 A — 75.

Cal — Floyd, Yost (1), DiSalvo (5) and Takasaki.
SJSU — Zenger, Hackett (5) and Ellinger.
WP — Yost (4-3) LP — Zenger (9-8)
Records Cal — 26-17, SJSU 16-23
T — 1:56 A — 75.

Raiders get Allen, seek Woodson in draft

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP) — The Oakland Raiders had the worst defense in the NFL last season, in large part because of severe problems at cornerback.

They took a big step toward solving those problems with the acquisition of six-time Pro Bowler Eric Allen, and may add Heisman Trophy winner Charles Woodson with the fourth pick in this weekend's draft.

Allen was obtained in a trade with New Orleans in early March, but at first threatened to retire rather than join the Raiders. He announced Wednesday he is eager to become part of the Oakland secondary.

Woodson was the best college cornerback in the country last season, and has been compared to Deion Sanders because of his cameo appearances on offense. He returned punts.

Though Woodson is not as fast as Sanders, he's nearly as exciting. He intercepted eight passes for the Wolverines last season and caught 12 others as a receiver — including two for touchdowns.

"The impact the guy had in college was exceptional," Allen said. "And I think he'll make a good pro."

New Raiders coach Jon Gruden recognizes Woodson's versatility, but does not expect

him to do anything but play cornerback for the early part of his career.

"He's one of those guys, he could drive the bus. He could do a number of things for a team," Gruden said. "In the long range there are some options for him

as an offensive player and as a return specialist."

The Raiders already are set at punt returner with Desmond Howard, also a Heisman Trophy winner at Michigan and the fourth pick overall in the 1992 draft by Washington.

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Fund-raiser, festivities, free lunch kick off SaberCats fourth season

By Anthony Perez
Assistant Sports Editor

The SaberCats — San Jose's version of the 50-yard indoor war — ventured outdoors Thursday.

The two hour long mid-day celebration to promote arena football, which took place at Plaza De Cesar Chavez, was filled with live music, boisterous radio personalities from a half-dozen local radio stations along with the main attraction of free food.

The combination brought over a thousand people into the park, many of whom came for the food and the music, some didn't know about the SaberCats.

"The free food is great," said San Jose State University senior R.B. Bonner, who was on his lunch break from a nearby bank. "I don't know much about the SaberCats, but coming just for the free food was worth it."

Eight radio stations set booths up on the park perimeter along with several other sponsors that helped the SaberCats raise \$7,500 for Families First, a non-profit agency.

Families First is a state-wide organization headquartered in Davis that helps over 2,000 children annually that have been victims of family violence.

"This has been an excellent event," said Families First com-

munity relations director Karen Simms. "This is a much larger turnout than expected."

The stage had a procession of SaberCats front office people, coaches and local radio big shots like KSJO's Tim Jeffrey and KTCT's "The Ticket" afternoon hosts Rod Brooks and Dan Scilio. The event was emceed by Greg Kihn.

The four-year-old team, which plays its home games at the San Jose Arena, is part of the 12-year-old Arena Football League.

They will open up tonight in a preseason game against the New York CityHawks at the San Jose Arena at 7:30 p.m.

"There are obvious differences (between the NFL and arena football), but it's also a combination of a few different sports," said Keena Turner, the SaberCats television color man and former 49er. "Like basketball there is the potential for turnovers and several lead changes. And it's like hockey because it has the wall."

Head coach Todd Shell, who's well known for his exhaustive workouts, said he won't know how good his team is until it hits the field.

"We have a lot of young players," said Shell who has been with the team since the start. "We're going to need the two preseason games to get ready. We have a lot of talent, but because we are young we'll need time to adjust."

The SaberCats enter the season for the first time without quarterback Tony Kimbrough. 6-foot-7-inch Cree Morris replaces Kimbrough, who is on the SaberCats' refused to report list after having an off-season trade voided.

The quarterback is the only position on the field in which the player doesn't play both ways.

"I started in three games last year so I have some experience," Morris said. "I went from being the third string last year to starting this year."

San Jose State University's lone representative on the SaberCats, lineman Howard Butler, was not in attendance Thursday.

Along with some of the SaberCats players in attendance were the complete ensemble of the SaberKittens, the team's female cheerleading squad, making their first public appearance of the year.

"It's good to see all the fans and families out here," said SaberKitten Kelly Goldton. "This is different than anything else I've ever done."

There were no arrests or any other problems according to San Jose Police Department officers on the scene.

"It was pretty nice," said Jerome Robinson, a freshman biology major at SJSU. "I walked to the bank when I saw it. I like all types of football."



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